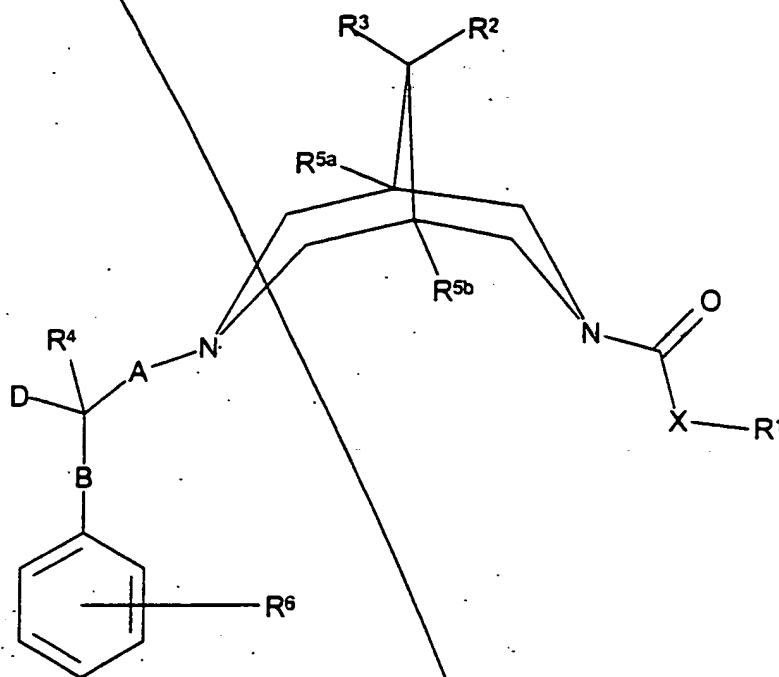


1 (Amended). A compound of formula I,



wherein

R<sup>1</sup> represents C<sub>1-12</sub> alkyl, -(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>a</sub>-aryl, or (CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>a</sub>Het<sup>1</sup> (all of which are optionally substituted by one or more substituents selected from -OH, halo, cyano, nitro, C<sub>1-4</sub> alkyl and/or C<sub>1-4</sub> alkoxy);

a represents 0, 1, 2, 3, or 4;

Het<sup>1</sup> represents a five to ten-membered heterocyclic ring containing one or more heteroatoms selected from oxygen, nitrogen and/or sulfur, and which also optionally includes one or more =O substituents;

X represents O or S;

R<sup>5a</sup> and R<sup>5b</sup> independently represent H or C<sub>1-3</sub> alkyl;

$R^2$  and  $R^3$  independently represent H,  $C_{1-4}$  alkyl (optionally substituted with one or more nitro or cyano groups),  $OR^7$ ,  $N(R^{7a})R^{7b}$ ,  $OC(O)R^8$  or together form  $-O-(CH_2)_2-O-$ ,  $-(CH_2)_3-$ ,  $-(CH_2)_4-$  or  $-(CH_2)_5-$ ;

$R^7$  and  $R^8$  independently represent H,  $C_{1-6}$  alkyl or  $-(CH_2)_b$ -aryl (which latter two groups are optionally substituted by one or more substituents selected from  $-OH$ , halo, cyano, nitro,  $C_{1-4}$  alkyl and/or  $C_{1-4}$  alkoxy);

$R^{7a}$  and  $R^{7b}$  independently represent H or  $C_{1-6}$  alkyl;

b represents 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4;

$R^4$  represents H or  $C_{1-6}$  alkyl;

D represents H,  $-OH$ , or  $-(CH_2)_cN(R^{10})(R^{11})$ ;

c represents 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4;

$R^{10}$  represents H,  $C_{1-6}$  alkyl,  $-(CH_2)_d$ -aryl,  $-C(NH)NH_2$ ,  $-S(O)_2R^{13}$ ,  $-[C(O)]_eN(R^{14})(R^{15})$ ,  $-C(O)R^{16}$  or  $-C(O)OR^{17}$ ;

e represents 1 or 2;

$R^{11}$  represents H,  $C_{1-6}$  alkyl,  $-C(O)R^{18}$  or  $-(CH_2)_f$ -aryl (which latter group is optionally substituted by one or more substituents selected from  $-OH$ , cyano, halo, amino, nitro,  $C_{1-6}$  alkyl and/or  $C_{1-6}$  alkoxy);

$R^{14}$ ,  $R^{15}$ ,  $R^{16}$ ,  $R^{17}$  and  $R^{18}$  independently represent H,  $C_{1-6}$  alkyl, Het<sup>2</sup> or  $-(CH_2)_g$ -aryl (which latter three groups are optionally substituted by one or more substituents selected from  $-OH$ , cyano, halo, amino, nitro,  $C_{1-6}$  alkyl and/or  $C_{1-6}$  alkoxy);

3.  $R^{13}$  represents  $C_{1-6}$  alkyl, aryl or  $-(CH_2)_h$ -aryl (all of which are all optionally substituted by one or more substituents chosen from halo, nitro,  $C_{1-6}$  alkyl and/or  $C_{1-6}$  alkoxy);

d, f, g and h independently represent 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4;

Het<sup>2</sup> represents a five to ten-membered heterocyclic ring containing one or more heteroatoms selected from oxygen, nitrogen and/or sulfur, and which also optionally includes one or more =O substituents;

Sub F1  
R<sup>6</sup> represents one or more optional substituents selected from -OH, cyano, halo, amino, nitro,  $C_{1-6}$  alkyl (optionally terminated by  $-N(H)C(O)OR^{18a}$ ),  $C_{1-6}$  alkoxy,  $-C(O)N(H)R^{19}$ ,  $-NHC(O)N(H)R^{20}$ ,  $-N(H)S(O)_2R^{21}$  and/or  $-OS(O)_2R^{22}$ ;

R<sup>19</sup> and R<sup>20</sup> independently represent H or  $C_{1-6}$  alkyl;

R<sup>18a</sup>, R<sup>21</sup> and R<sup>22</sup> independently represent  $C_{1-6}$  alkyl;

A represents a single bond,  $C_{1-6}$  alkylene,  $-N(R^{23})(CH_2)_j$ -,  $-O(CH_2)_j$ - or  $-(CH_2)_jC(H)(OR^{23})(CH_2)_k$ - (in which latter three groups, the  $-(CH_2)_j$ - group is attached to the bispidine nitrogen atom, and which latter four groups are all optionally substituted by one or more OH groups);

B represents a single bond,  $C_{1-4}$  alkylene,  $-(CH_2)_mN(R^{24})$ -,  $(CH_2)_mS(O)_n$ -,  $-(CH_2)_mO$ - (in which three latter groups, the  $-(CH_2)_m$ - group is attached to the carbon atom bearing D and R<sup>4</sup>),  $-C(O)N(R^{24})$ - (in which latter group, the  $-C(O)$ - group is attached to the carbon atom bearing D and R<sup>4</sup>),  $N(R^{24})C(O)O(CH_2)_m$ - or  $-N(R^{24})(CH_2)_m$ - (in which latter two groups, the  $N(R^{24})$  group is attached to the carbon atom bearing D and R<sup>4</sup>);

j, k and m independently represent 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4;

n represents 0, 1 or 2;

R<sup>23</sup> represents H, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkyl or

R<sup>24</sup> represents H or C<sub>1-6</sub> alkyl;

R<sup>25</sup> represents H, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkyl, Het<sup>3</sup> or -(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>p</sub>-aryl (which latter two groups are optionally substituted by one or more substituents selected from -OH, cyano, halo, amino, nitro, C<sub>1-6</sub> alkyl and/or C<sub>1-6</sub> alkoxy);

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Het<sup>3</sup> represents a five to ten-membered heterocyclic ring containing one or more heteroatoms selected from oxygen, nitrogen and/or sulfur, and which also optionally includes one or more =O substituents;

p represents 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4;

or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt, solvate or protected derivative thereof;

provided that:

(a) when D represents either H or -OH, and R<sup>5a</sup> and R<sup>5b</sup> both represent H, then at least one of R<sup>2</sup> and R<sup>3</sup> represents OR<sup>7</sup>, OC(O)R<sup>8</sup> or C<sub>1-4</sub> alkyl, which alkyl group is substituted with one or more nitro or cyano groups; and

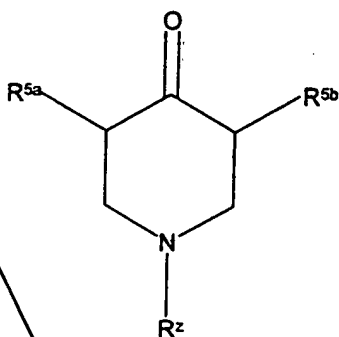
(b) when D represents -OH or -(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>c</sub>N(R<sup>10</sup>)R<sup>11</sup> in which c represents 0, then:-

(i) A does not represent -N(R<sup>23</sup>)(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>j</sub>-, -O(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>j</sub>- or -CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>j</sub>C(H)(OR<sup>23</sup>)(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>k</sub>- (in which k is 0); and/or

(ii) m does not represent 0 when B represents -(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>m</sub>N(R<sup>24</sup>)-, -(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>m</sub>S(O)<sub>n</sub>- or -(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>m</sub>O-.

23 (Amended). A compound of formula IV as defined in Claim 21, or a protected derivative thereof, provided that when  $R^{5a}$  and  $R^{5b}$  both represent H, then at least one of  $R^2$  and  $R^3$  represents  $OR^7$ ,  $OC(O)R^8$  or  $C_{1-4}$  alkyl, which alkyl group is substituted with one or more nitro or cyano groups.

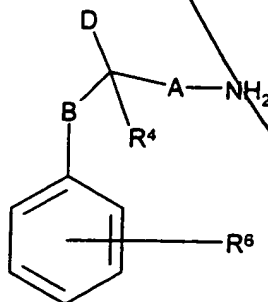
26 (Amended). A process for the preparation of a compound of formula VIII, as defined in Claim 24, or a compound of formula XVII, as defined in Claim 25, which comprises reaction of a compound of formula XXIX,



XXIX

wherein  $R^z$  represents H or  $-C(O)XR^1$  and  $R^1$ ,  $R^{5a}$ ,  $R^{5b}$  and X are as defined in Claim 1 with [(as appropriate) either:

(1)] a compound of formula XXX,



XXX

~~Sub F1~~  
or a protected derivative thereof, wherein R<sup>4</sup>, R<sup>6</sup>, A, B and D are as defined  
in Claim 1, in all cases in the presence of a formaldehyde.

Please add the following new claim.

~~Sub F1~~  
27 (New). A method as claimed in Claim 20, wherein the arrhythmia is  
an atrial or a ventricular arrhythmia.